

TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



Minutes of the Annual meeting of Telscombe Town Council held on Wednesday 20th May 2026 at 7.30pm in the Council Chamber at Telscombe Civic Centre.

Councillors Present:- Cllrs Clarkson, Gallagher *Mayor*, O'Connor, Page, Robinson, Sharkey, Watts *Deputy Mayor* & Williamson

Also present:- Stella Newman, Town Clerk & RFO (*minutes*)
Cllr Chapman, ESCC
11 members of the public

The outgoing Mayor, Cllr Sharkey, welcomed everyone to the meeting. She reflected that the start of her term of office had progressed positively, however, due to ill health she was subsequently able to attend only a limited number of engagements as Mayor. She expressed her thanks to the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Watts, for stepping in and undertaking mayoral duties during this period and presented him with an engraved glass keepsake as a token of appreciation for his support and service during her period of office. Cllr Sharkey also thanked Councillors and officers for their support and assistance at her fundraising events, and gave special thanks to volunteer Stan Newman for hosting the bingo evenings and race night. She advised that more than £6,000 had been raised during her Mayoral year, enabling donations to be made to the following organisations:- The Joff Youth Club for raised planters and a shelter with solar panels to enable young people to make more use of the outside area; South Coast Sussex Gull Advice/Resource Network (SCARN) for running costs to enable the group to rescue and rehabilitate injured gulls; Peacehaven Community School for wildlife camera & binoculars to enable students to monitor the wildlife around the school and tree guards to protect some trees recently planted; Develop Outdoors CIC for a Bokashi Bin and Jora composter to turn food waste into usable soil for their vegetable growing project by the new poly tunnel and finally SNEEK CIC (Sustainability, Nature, Environment, Education, Knowledge) for swift boxes and their installation at the Joff for the benefit of the young people who are involved in the project.

2611. TO ELECT TOWN MAYOR FOR 2026/27 AND RECEIVE THEIR DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

Cllr Sharkey asked for nominations for a Mayor for the 2026/27 year and it was proposed by Cllr Watts, seconded by Cllr O'Connor and, as there were no other nominations, it was unanimously **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Gallagher as Mayor for the 2026/27 year. Cllr Sharkey presented Cllr Gallagher with the chain of office and Cllr Gallagher signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office, which was countersigned by the Town Clerk as Proper Officer. Cllr Gallagher then took over as Chair of the meeting and presented Cllr Sharkey with her past Mayor's badge of office. She advised that she would be recording the meeting.

Cllr Gallagher thanked Councillors for appointing her as Mayor and spoke of her affection for the local area. She advised that serving as Mayor would provide her with the opportunity to give back to the community and that she intended to support and promote young talent in the arts during her Mayoral year. The groups and organisations to benefit from her fundraising activities would be nominated in due course.

2612. TO ELECT DEPUTY MAYOR FOR 2026/27 AND RECEIVE THEIR DECLARATION OF ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE

It was proposed by Cllr Sharkey, seconded by Cllr Robinson and, as there were no other nominations, unanimously **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Watts as Deputy Mayor for the 2026/27 year.



2612. To Elect Deputy Mayor for 2026/27 and receive their declaration of acceptance of office (Contd)

The Mayor, Cllr Gallagher, presented Cllr Watts with the chain of office and he signed his Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was countersigned by the Town Clerk as Proper Officer. Cllr Watts thanked Councillors for appointing him.

The meeting was adjourned for public question time.

2613. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

The secretary of the Telscombe Residents Association asked if any help was needed in setting up the repair café and Cllr Watts advised he had all the previous information he had given him. The secretary also asked if the Council had any plans to renew other pathways in Chatsworth Park and he was advised that the Council monitor the pathways and are always trying to find funding sources.

A member of the public asked if any accessibility improvements were planned for Telscombe Tye and she was advised that thanks to a project managed by Lewes District Council and funded by the South Downs National Park, several improvements on the Telscombe and East Saltdean sides had recently been undertaken. An issue had, however, been highlighted regarding the gates and possible alterations were being looked at.

7.55 pm - Cllr Page joined the meeting, prior notice of his late arrival having been given.

A resident commended both Peacehaven and Telscombe Councils on the successful progression of the Neighbourhood Plan and extended particular thanks to Cllr Gallagher, as Chair of the Steering Group, and Brighton Planning for their work in its preparation. He advised that he had been involved in the early stages of the Plan and acknowledged Cllr Gallagher's significant efforts in guiding it through to referendum.

A representative from Brighton Planning congratulated everyone on the success of the Neighbourhood Plan, but raised a query regarding distribution of CIL funds. Cllr O'Connor advised he will clarify this with Lewes District Council.

The meeting resumed at 8.20 pm.

The Mayor advised that she felt it would be appropriate to bring forward Agenda Item 37 – 'Verbal Reports from the Outgoing Mayor, Deputy Mayor, District Councillors, County Councillor, and Outside Body Representatives', rather than considering it at the end of the meeting, in order to enable members of the public present to hear the contributions from the District and County Councillors. Cllr O'Connor also proposed bringing agenda Item 36 – 'To Consider and agree the Council's response to the Government consultation on Local Government Reorganisation in our area' forward for the same reasons, which was seconded by Cllr Williamson and unanimously **RESOLVED**.

2614. REPORTS FROM:-

District Councillors:- Cllr O'Connor advised that Lewes District Council had issued a special edition of District News regarding the Local Government Reorganisation, asking residents to participate in the consultation. He also advised that the Local Plan is moving forward, with various consultations having been held and the responses are being checked.



2614. Reports From (Contd)

The Mayor welcomed newly elected East Sussex County Councillor, Cllr Stephen Chapman, to the meeting and advised the Council is keen to work with him.

County Councillor:- Cllr Chapman advised that he has lived locally for the past 23 years and provided an overview of his professional background. He stated that he wished to focus on key local issues, including concerns relating to the A259 and expressed reservations regarding the Local Government Reorganisation proposals, particularly the potential for the area to come under the authority of Brighton and Hove City Council. He further advised that he is seeking advice on preparing a standard response to the consultation, which he intends to print and distribute to all households within his ward. He noted that, should any individuals be willing to assist with distribution, Town Council staff could provide his contact details so that they may liaise with him directly.

The Deputy Mayor and representatives from outside bodies had no updates to report.

2615. TO CONSIDER AND AGREE THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION IN OUR AREA

The Mayor highlighted the Government's current consultation proposals, which include the potential incorporation of Telscombe Town Council, Peacehaven Town Council and parts of Falmer areas into Brighton and Hove City Council's administrative area. There was discussion regarding how the Council should formulate its response, and it was noted that previous consultations had been responded to with objections to inclusion within Brighton and Hove City Council, with a firm preference to remain within the One East Sussex area. It was proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously **RESOLVED** that Telscombe Town Council strongly opposes being included within the Brighton and Hove City Council area and that a Working Group consisting of Cllrs O'Connor, Robinson, Watts, Williamson and the Town Clerk formulate a response to the consultation, to be agreed by a majority of Councillors via email and submitted by the Town Clerk before the closing date of 15th June.

8.40 pm – 7 members of the public left the meeting.

2616. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Cllrs Lawrie and Judd who were away and Cllr Ndeloa who was working away. Cllr Page had given prior notice of his late arrival due to a medical appointment. These reasons for absence were accepted.

2617. TO RECEIVE MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN RELATION TO MATTERS ON THE AGENDA

There were no declarations of interest.

2618. TO APPROVE & SIGN MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 18th MARCH 2026

It was proposed by Cllr Watts, seconded by Cllr Clarkson and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting on 18th March 2026 were a true record of the proceedings and were signed as correct by the Mayor, Cllr Gallagher.

2619. TO AGREE MINUTES FROM THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEES AND ADOPT RECOMMENDATIONS

- a) **Amenities & Civic Centre** – Cllr O'Connor proposed that the minutes of the meeting on 4th February 2026 be accepted and the recommendations adopted, seconded by Cllr Watts and **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and recommendations adopted.
- b) **Planning & Highways** – Cllr Gallagher proposed that the minutes of the meetings on 11th March, and 1st and 22nd April 2026 be accepted and the recommendations adopted, seconded by Cllr Williamson and **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and recommendations adopted.
- c) **Policy & Resources** – Cllr Clarkson proposed that the minutes of the meeting on 4th March 2026 be accepted and the recommendations adopted, seconded by Cllr O'Connor and **RESOLVED** that the minutes be accepted and recommendations adopted.

2620. TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO COMMITTEES & SUB-COMMITTEES AND AGREE COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Minor adjustments were made to the draft list sent with the agenda in view of Cllr Gallagher being elected as Mayor. It was proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr O'Connor and unanimously **RESOLVED** to appoint the following members to Committees, with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor automatically become Ex-Officio full voting members of all Committees & Sub-Committees:-

Amenities & Civic Centre (ACC) - Cllrs Clarkson, Gallagher, Judd, Lawrie, O'Connor, Robinson, Sharkey, Watts and Williamson

Planning & Highways (P&H) - Cllrs Clarkson, Gallagher, Lawrie, Ndeloa, O'Connor, Robinson, Watts and Williamson

Policy & Resources (P&R) - Cllrs Clarkson, Gallagher, Judd, Lawrie, O'Connor, Page, Robinson and Watts –

- **Grants (Sub-Committee of P&R)** - Cllrs Clarkson, Gallagher, O'Connor, Page, Robinson and Watts
- **Audit (Sub-Committee of P&R)** - Cllrs Clarkson, Gallagher, O'Connor, Page, Robinson and Watts
- **Employment (Sub-Committee of P&R)** - Cllrs Gallagher, Judd, Lawrie, O'Connor, Robinson and Watts

ACC Chair - It was proposed by Cllr Robinson, seconded by Cllr Sharkey and unanimously **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr O'Connor as Chair of the Amenities & Civic Centre Committee

P&H Chair – it was proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr Page and unanimously **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Gallagher as Chair of the Planning & Highways Committee.

P&R Chair – It was proposed by Cllr O'Connor, seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously **RESOLVED** to appoint Cllr Clarkson as Chair of the Policy & Resources Committee.

Committee Vice-Chairs will be appointed at the first Committee meetings of the municipal year.

TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



2621. TO APPOINT REPRESENTATIVES TO OUTSIDE BODIES

It was proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr Williamson and unanimously **RESOLVED** to appoint the following Councillor representatives to outside bodies:

Age Concern – Cllr Clarkson
British Legion – Cllrs Judd & Watts
Citizens Advice – Cllr Sharkey
Community Transport for Lewes Area (CTLA) – Cllr O'Connor
Crimestoppers – Cllr Watts
East Sussex Association of Local Councils – Cllr Gallagher
Emergency Planning Team – Cllr Judd
Greenhavens – Cllr Gallagher
The House Project – Cllr Gallagher
Joint Action Group – Cllr O'Connor (substitute Cllr Clarkson)
Lewes District Association of Local & Parish Councils – Cllr Clarkson
Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – Cllrs Judd & Lawrie
OVESCO – Cllr Gallagher
Peacehaven Chamber of Commerce – Cllr Gallagher
Peacehaven Football Club – Cllrs Gallagher & Robinson
POLO (Parishes of the Lower Ouse) – Cllrs Gallagher & Lawrie
Saltdean Residents & Community Association – Cllr O'Connor
Strengthening Local Relationships (SLR) – Cllrs O'Connor & Robinson
South Downs National Park – Cllrs Clarkson & Gallagher
Sussex Community Development Association (SCDA) – Cllr Robinson
Telscombe Residents Association – Attendance in rotation by all Telscombe Ward Councillors

2622. TO APPROVE PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS FOR FEBRUARY AND MARCH 2026

Payments for February 2026 totalling £21,825.79 and receipts of £4,081.52, and payments for March 2026 totalling £51,653.47 and receipts of £5,896.60 were proposed as correct by Cllr Robinson, seconded by Cllr Page it was unanimously **RESOLVED** that they be approved and were signed by the Mayor, Cllr Gallagher.

2623. TO AGREE INCOME & EXPENDITURE FIGURES TO YEAR END AT 31st MARCH 2026, NOTE NEW FIGURES AT 1st APRIL 2026 AND GENERAL RESERVE UPDATE

The Town Clerk's report advised that the overall actual year-end figures at 31st March 2026 were income of £380,075 and expenditure of £337,897. The report detailed any significant differences between budget and actual spend figures, as shown on accompanying detailed lists from the accounting package. The overall income and expenditure percentages against budget for all Committees were as follows:-

Policy & Resources:- Income 103% and Expenditure 91.5%

Amenities:- Income 190.6% and Expenditure 58.4%

Civic Centre:- Income 106.3% and Expenditure 71.4%

Planning & Highways:- Income 130.6% (including CIL monies) and Expenditure 89.5%

The year-end figures reflect a positive financial position, with expenditure remaining within budget and income exceeding budget expectations. Appreciation was expressed to the Town Clerk/RFO for achieving this positive outcome.



2623. To agree income and expenditure figures to year end at 31st March 2026, note new figures at 1st April 2026 and general reserve update

The income and expenditure list at 1st April 2025 for the Council showed the new year's budget lines including amendments over the previous years.

It was proposed by Cllr Williamson, seconded by Cllr Page and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the actual total figures to year end at 31st March 2026 of £380,075 income (including the full precept) and expenditure of £337,897 be agreed as correct and that the new year figures at 1st April 2026 were correct.

The general reserve position for 2026/27 of £158,310, equating to 5.5 months of net revenue expenditure and falling within the recommended levels set out in the Practitioner's Guide, was noted.

2624. TO APPROVE COUNCIL'S BALANCE SHEET FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH 2026

It was proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr Page and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the balance sheet was correct showing total assets, less current liabilities, of £537,315 represented by the general reserve of £158,310 and earmarked reserves of 379,006. It was signed as correct by the Mayor, Cllr Gallagher and the Responsible Financial Officer, Stella Newman.

2625. TO NOTE ACTION LIST AND AGREE ANY FURTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED

Date of Meeting	Issue Detail	Action Owner	Update	Due Date
20.11.24	Min 2362, p 4243 – To consider purchasing Adobe Pro	SN	It was agreed at full Council on 17.9.25 to proceed with purchase & set a revised due date.	March '26
16.7.25	Min 2480, p 4394 – To review possible merger with Peacehaven TC	SN	As agreed, I contacted PTC Clerk re a meeting, but no response received. It was agreed at full Council on 17.9.25 to continue to try and progress this. <i>Agreed at meeting on 21.1.26 to continue to pursue & Cllr Gallagher to follow up with PTC.</i>	July '26
18.3.26	Min 2589, p 4553 – To consider options for a possible repair café at the Civic Centre	SN	A working group is to be formed and meet to discuss options.	Sept '26
18.3.26	Min 2592, p 4553 – To review general & ER's; agree amounts to put into ER's for the 26/27 financial year & agree virement of funds	SN	Virements and transfers into ER's have been undertaken.	Complete
18.3.26	Min 2595, P 4555 – To consider estimate from the Parkinson Partnership on advice re VAT on café project	SN	The Parkinson Partnership have been consulted and this is progressing.	July '26

TELSCOMBE TOWN COUNCIL



2625. To note action list and agree any further actions required (Contd)

Date of Meeting	Issue Detail	Action Owner	Update	Due Date
18.3.26	Min 2601, p 4556 – To adopt Employment Handbook	SN	A copy of the updated Employment Handbook has been emailed to all employees & a copy is available in the Town Clerk's office for them to inspect when required.	Complete
18.3.26	Min 2602, p 4556 – Update on café project & agree further actions required	SN	A working group meeting has taken place to discuss the business plan and a follow-up meeting is to be arranged to finalise details.	July '26
18.3.26	Min 2603, p 4556 – Update on devolvment of LDC assets & agree if we want to take on any assets	SN	LDC were informed we did not want to take on any assets.	Complete
18.3.26	Min 2604, p 4556 – Update on proposed 20m high telecoms pole & associated telecoms equipment on the patio at the Civic Centre & agree way forward	SN	United Infrastructure were informed of our decision not to agree to the upgraded equipment and the reasons why. They have since come back to us with additional information.	See new agenda item
18.3.26	Min 2605, p 4556 – Update on the Neighbourhood Plan, agree any further actions & associated cost to update the Council's website	SN	The proposed leaflet was not approved by LDC and so was not printed. A referendum took place on 7 th May and the result was positive. The Council's website will be updated after the referendum.	Complete June '26
18.3.26	Min 2606, p 4557 – To review Civic Centre hire charges for political parties	SN	Council staff have been informed that political parties are to be charged the private/ commercial hire rate.	Complete
18.3.26	Min 2608, p 4557 – To consider tenders received for grounds maintenance contract 2 for 2026/27 and agree to appoint a contractor	SN	Contract was awarded to Ace Landscapes for £5,041 plus VAT and a contract has been issued and signed.	Complete

Min 2589, p 4553 – To consider options for a possible repair café at the Civic Centre – Cllr Sharkey advised she would like to join the working group.

Min 2480, p 4394 – To review possible merger with Peacehaven TC – Councillors agreed this is something they would like to keep active and for it to be left on the action list.

The remainder of action list was noted and no further actions were required.



2626. BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE/REVIEW

Having considered the current version of the business plan and the proposal from the Policy & Resources Committee, it was proposed by Cllr Gallagher, seconded by Cllr O'Connor and unanimously **RESOLVED** to add the Project 'value for money review' with the objective 'a review of council services and costs at the beginning of the plan as it relates to all Committees and full Council and that no other were required.

2627. TO AGREE BANK MANDATE/SIGNATORIES TO THE COUNCIL'S BANK ACCOUNT

It was proposed by Cllr Williamson, seconded by Cllr Robinson unanimously **RESOLVED** that Cllrs Robinson, Gallagher, O'Connor and Page remain as signatories to the Council's bank accounts, that the Town Clerk/RFO remains as a signatory and that the Admin & Finance Assistant is added as an emergency back-up in the absence of the Town Clerk/RFO. It was noted that the bank is undertaking a review of the account and requires updated Mandates.

2628. TO AGREE BANK MANDATE/SIGNATORIES TO MAYOR'S CHARITY FUND BANK ACCOUNT

It was proposed by Cllr Robinson, seconded by Cllr Watts and unanimously **RESOLVED** that Councillors Robinson, Gallagher and Page remain as signatories to the Mayor's charity fund bank account, that Cllr O'Connor is added as an additional signatory in view of Cllr Gallagher being Mayor and therefore not being able to authorise payments, that the Town Clerk/RFO remains as a signatory and that the Admin & Finance Assistant is added as an emergency back-up in the absence of the Town Clerk/RFO. It was noted that the bank is undertaking a review of the account and requires updated Mandates.

2629. TO REVIEW AND AGREE CREDIT CARD SPENDING LIMIT

Following consideration, it was proposed by Cllr Page, seconded by Cllr Williamson unanimously **RESOLVED** that the credit card spending limit is increased to £3,000.

2630. TO CONSIDER INTERNAL AUDITOR'S FINAL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION FOR YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2026 AND THE ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2025/26 ON THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR)

It was proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr Page and unanimously **RESOLVED** that (a) the internal auditor's final report be approved (b) that no actions were needed to be undertaken as the recommendation from the interim report had been discussed at full Council in November; and (c) that the Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/26 on the AGAR had been completed showing that we were compliant with all requirements.

2631. TO APPOINT AN INTERNAL AUDITOR FOR THE 2026/27 FINANCIAL YEAR

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Williamson, seconded by Cllr Clarkson and unanimously **RESOLVED** to (a) appoint April Skies Accounting as internal auditor for the 2026/27 financial year as they meet the required criteria of being independent and competent, and that their Terms of Engagement are taken to the next meeting for consideration; (b) that a review of an auditor for the 2027/28 year is undertaken.

2632. TO REVIEW THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL

Having reviewed the Town Clerk's detailed report, it was proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr Page and unanimously **RESOLVED** that Telscombe Town Council has achieved the requirements of an effective system of internal control as it has:-

- reviewed the Council's Financial Regulations and Standing Orders;
- monitored budgets and financial reporting throughout the year;
- undertaken regular bank reconciliations and payment authorisation checks;
- reviewed the Council's risk assessments and insurance arrangements;
- maintained and reviewed the asset register;
- considered internal audit reports and recommendations;
- reviewed the effectiveness and independence of the Internal Auditor;
- ensured compliance with statutory and governance requirements

2633. TO APPROVE COUNCIL'S ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT (SECTION 1) ON THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) FOR YEAR TO 31st MARCH 2026

The first section of the AGAR is the Annual Governance Statement which must be approved prior to Section 2, The Accounting Statements. By approving it the Council confirms that to the best of its knowledge and belief, it has complied with all assertions for the year ended 31st March 2026. Having considered the Annual Governance Statement and the Town Clerk's report that detailed how we had met all the assertions contained in it, it was proposed by Cllr Watts, seconded by Cllr Robinson and unanimously **RESOLVED** that to the best of its knowledge and belief Telscombe Town Council had complied with all the assertions in Section 1 - The Annual Governance Statement 2025/26 and therefore approved the Annual Governance Statement for the year end 31st March 2026 and that it be signed by the Mayor, Cllr Gallagher and the Town Clerk/RFO, Stella Newman.

2634. TO APPROVE COUNCIL'S ACCOUNTING STATEMENTS (SECTION 2) ON THE ANNUAL GOVERNANCE & ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN (AGAR) FOR YEAR TO 31st MARCH 2026

Having considered the Accounting Statements for 2025/26 contained within Section 2 of the AGAR, together with the supporting documentation including the reserves reconciliation detailing the variance between Boxes 7 and 8, the bank, cash and investment reconciliation, and the explanation of variances to be submitted with the AGAR, it was proposed by Cllr Williamson, seconded by Cllr O'Connor and unanimously **RESOLVED** to approve the Accounting Statements for 2025/26. It was noted that the statements had been signed by the Responsible Financial Officer on 16 April 2026 as presenting fairly the financial position of the Council and being consistent with the Council's accounting records. It was further **RESOLVED** that the Mayor, Cllr Gallagher, sign the statements on behalf of the Council.

2635. TO AGREE DATES FOR EXERCISE OF PUBLIC RIGHTS, SET BY THE RFO, RELATING TO ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

It was proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr O'Connor unanimously **RESOLVED** to agree to display the completed Notice of Public Rights and other documentation to meet the requirements on the dates set by the RFO, being the External Auditor's suggested dates, from Wednesday 3rd June to Tuesday 12th July 2026, with the announcement being displayed on Monday 1st June 2026.



2636. TO APPROVE SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS

It was proposed by Cllr Williamson, seconded by Cllr Sharkey unanimously **RESOLVED** to approve the following subscription renewals:-

East Sussex Association of Local Councils (ESALC) – key association for support, training and information for local Councils and National Association of Local Councils (NALC), the national body providing support and information for local Councils - approx. £2,500.

Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) – Town Clerk's membership as required in her contract of employment to assist with continued professional development and advice - approx. £475.

Lewes District Association of Local Councils (LDALC) – key association for networking with other councils and receiving updates and information on local council news and issues - approx. £50.

Peacehaven Chamber of Commerce – provides networking opportunities with local traders etc, approx. £50.

Zoom - online communications platform, approx. £70.

Parish Online – online mapping service, approx. £170.

Information Commissioner – data protection service, approx. £50.

Satwana – Data Protection Officer, Registration Only Service – approx. £170.

2637. TO APPROVE SERVICE & SUPPORT CONTRACT RENEWALS

It was proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr Williamson and unanimously **RESOLVED** to approve the following service and support contract renewals and that they are paid by Direct Debit where required:-

Service contracts:-

CK Office Solutions - for photocopier

ESCC – street light maintenance

Focus Group – maintenance and in-life support for phone system included in sogea line rental (36 month lease agreed July '23)

Gregory Gas Heating & Plumbing – for gas boilers

Haven Alarms – CCTV system

Languard Alarms - for intruder alarm servicing & repairs

Pyrotec - for fire extinguisher servicing

Securitel - fire alarm to include emergency lighting 3 hr duration test

Sussex Lifts - for lift servicing

Thomas Doors – automatic front door

Support contracts:-

Rialtas (RBS) – Omega accounts and bookings packages

Northstar – IT maintenance (5 year long term contract agreed at P&R in September 2022)

Cloud back-up; Office 365 for staff & Cllr emails

2638. TO APPROVE DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT

Following consideration of the document, it was proposed by Cllr Robinson, seconded by Cllr Watts and unanimously **RESOLVED** to approve the Annual Report for 2025/26 and publish it on the Council's website.



2639. TO ADOPT REVIEWED FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Following consideration of the document, which had been updated and agreed at the Policy & Resources Committee meeting on 6th May, it was proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr O'Connor unanimously **RESOLVED** to adopt the updated Financial Regulations showing an increased amount of £615,000 for regulation 6.9.iv and the words 'pension contributions and HMRC payments' being removed from 7.9. A review is due in a year's time.

2640. TO ADOPT THE REVIEWED COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE & DELEGATION SCHEME

The Town Clerk's report advised that the Committee Terms of Reference & Delegation Scheme had been revised and agreed at the Policy & Resources Committee meeting on 6th May. It was proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr O'Connor and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Committee Terms of Reference & Delegation Scheme be adopted, which included a revision to the opening paragraph and an amendment to number 2.1 to bring the Policy & Resources Committee membership in line with other Committees. A review is due in a years' time.

2641. TO ADOPT THE REVIEWED MAYOR'S POLICY

Following consideration of the Policy which had been updated and agreed at the Policy & Resources Committee on 6th May, it was proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr O'Connor and unanimously **RESOLVED** to adopt the revised Mayor's Policy which removed the grant-based and thematic approach for fundraising and requires the Mayor to nominate and announce a maximum of 3 charities within 3 months of the start of their term of office. A review is due in 3 years' time.

2642. TO ADOPT THE REVIEWED MAYOR'S HANDBOOK

It was noted that the Policy & Resources Committee had reviewed the Handbook and agreed minor updates and it was therefore proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr O'Connor and unanimously **RESOLVED** to adopt the Mayor's Handbook with updates making it gender neutral, providing greater clarity and aligning with the updated Mayor's Policy.

2643. TO AGREE THE RECOMMENDATION FROM THE POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE THAT THE MAYOR'S GRANTS POLICY BE DISCONTINUED

As per the recommendation from the Policy & Resources Committee and the revised Mayor's Policy, it was proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr O'Connor and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Mayor's Grants Policy be discontinued.

2644. TO ADOPT THE NEW TYE GATE & FENCING POLICY

Following the recommendation from the Policy & Resources Committee, it was proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr O'Connor and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the new Tye Gate & Fencing Policy be adopted with a review due in 3 years' time.

2645. TO CONSIDER APPLYING FOR A SECOND CIL BID FOR THE CAFÉ BUILDING

There was extensive discussion regarding the project and the requirement to seek additional Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding. Members noted the latest project cost estimate from Lewes District



2645. To consider applying for a second CIL bid for the café building (Contd)

Council of £461,399.80 including VAT, excluding car park resurfacing works, which were estimated separately at in excess of £200,000.

Members were reminded that a previous CIL grant of £150,000 had been approved and that the Council had agreed to apply for a Public Works Loan Board loan of £150,000, based on earlier project estimates of £300,000. In light of the revised costs, a further CIL application for £81,000 would be required, together with match funding of £81,000, likely to be met through an increase in borrowing. This would result in a total loan requirement of £231,000. Repayment projections for a £231,000 loan had been circulated to Members. It was noted that, for a 20-year EIP loan, the Council would need to increase the next financial year's budget by £17,686, in addition to the £8,000 already included in the current year's budget, representing an estimated 5.24% increase in the precept.

Following consideration of the matter, it was proposed by Cllr Williamson, seconded by Cllr Sharkey, and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk prepare a further CIL funding application for £81,000, to be circulated to all Councillors via email for approval by a majority.

2646. TO AGREE PROPOSED LAYOUT OPTIONS FOR THE CAFÉ BUILDING

There was discussion regarding the drawings submitted by Lewes District Council's architect. Several options had been provided for the positioning of the proposed café building, with the recommended location being on the car park adjacent to the lower grassed area. A number of potential internal layout configurations had also been presented.

Members raised queries regarding the proposed layouts and the information upon which the architect's designs had been based. The Town Clerk confirmed that the architect had been provided with the Council's initial drawings together with all specified requirements. It was further explained that the current proposals prepared by the District Council's architect were based on the use of two containers, whereas the later concept of incorporating an additional amenity/community space would likely require the provision of a third container.

Members noted that, as set out in the updated capital expenditure figures provided by Lewes District Council, projected construction costs had already increased significantly from the original estimates, despite the cost-saving approach of utilising two containers while still providing the required facilities and amenities.

Members had reservations and did not feel a decision could be made at this meeting. It was therefore proposed by Cllr Clarkson, seconded by Cllr Williamson and **RESOLVED** by a majority that the layout options be discussed at a working group meeting and recommendations be brought back to full Council for agreement. Cllr O'Connor abstained.

2647. UPDATE ON TELECOMS EQUIPMENT AT THE CIVIC CENTRE & AGREE WAY FORWARD

Members noted the update received from United Infrastructure following notification by the Council that it did not approve the installation of the proposed alternative 20m telecoms mast and associated larger cabinet.



2647. Update on telecoms equipment at the Civic Centre & agree way forward (Contd)

United Infrastructure had responded referring to the Electronic Communications Code (Schedule 3A to the Communications Act 2003) and advised that its client may seek the imposition of rights through the Upper Tribunal (Lands Chamber) under the provisions of the Code. It was noted that, prior to this correspondence, reference had not been made to the Electronic Communications Code and the understanding had been that, should the Council not agree to the proposed higher mast and larger cabinet, the existing arrangements would remain unchanged.

As agreed with the Chair of the Amenities & Civic Centre Committee, and in order to demonstrate a willingness to engage constructively, the Town Clerk had responded requesting that amended proposals be considered by them which would reduce the height and visual impact of the installation, together with a smaller footprint and less intrusive design. United Infrastructure subsequently advised that the footprint of the installation was already the minimum possible and could not be reduced further. They also confirmed that a request had been submitted to the EMF team to determine whether a reduced mast height of 17.5m could be approved, although they indicated that they anticipated this proposal may not satisfy the required review process. An update from United Infrastructure is therefore awaited.

It was proposed by Cllr O'Connor, seconded by Cllr Williamson and unanimously **RESOLVED** that the Town Clerk seeks initial advice from the NALC legal team and if necessary subsequent legal advice subject to the spending limit afforded within our Financial Regulations to the Town Clerk and Committee or Council Chair of up to £2,000.

2648. URGENT MATTERS AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN FOR NOTING OR INCLUSION ON A FUTURE AGENDA

There were no urgent matters.

The Mayor closed the meeting at 9.40 pm.

Signed
Mayor

Date of next Council meeting – 22nd July 2026